The 2013 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Guidance

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Overview

The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll recognizes institutions of higher education that support exemplary community service programs and raises the visibility of best practices in community-campus partnerships. The President places a high priority on supporting the role that higher education plays in addressing the nation's most pressing social needs; this institutional recognition program supports those national service and education priorities.

The Honor Roll is an initiative of the Corporation for National and Community Service and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the American Council on Education and Campus Compact. The Honor Roll rewards institutions for achieving measurable impacts in strengthening communities.

Important Dates
Applications are due on **November 29, 2012 by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time**. Award announcements will be made in **March 2013**.

Background
For more than fifteen years, the Corporation for National and Community Service—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs—has mobilized a new generation of engaged citizens. This year, more than 1.8 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve through these programs. They will help thousands of national and community non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies meet local needs.

Goals
The 2013 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which recognizes service completed during the 2011-2012 academic year, focuses on community *outcomes*, such as the changes that result from the service activities. In this way, the Honor Roll encourages colleges and universities to deepen their practice of service.

The 2013 competition seeks to celebrate institutions with high-quality service programs. Characteristics of such programs include using evaluation and assessment, developing collaborative community partnerships, and addressing significant community needs. Applicants should demonstrate results that are measureable and supported by credible evidence.

Eligibility Information
All accredited degree-granting colleges and universities located in the United States and its territories are eligible to apply. Applications are accepted only from higher education institutions, not departments or schools within a college or university. In the case of state systems, each institution must apply separately.

For those colleges and universities participating in the Federal Work-Study (FWS) program, the institution **must** meet the statutory 7% minimum FWS community service requirement for the

most recent available school year. Please check with your Financial Aid office to ensure that your school meets this requirement or has received a waiver from the Department of Education.

The 2013 President's Higher Education Honor Roll Competition

Applications for the 2013 competition will be accepted in two categories: **General Community Service**, which recognizes the quality, quantity, and commitment to community service initiatives; and the **Special Focus Area,** which recognizes exemplary initiatives aligned with the President's priorities of summer learning, early childhood education and Promise Neighborhoods. The institution may elect to apply under one or both categories.

General Community Service
Institutions applying in this category can submit applications to document projects that address community issues across a variety of service areas, including, but not limited to, education, health, economic opportunity, the environment, disaster preparedness, or other human needs including veterans and military families. This category is designed to capture the breadth of higher education community service activities and applicants are free to select projects that display the scope of their service efforts.

Applicants in this category should describe how their institutions' services address significant community needs and produce measureable results. Strong applications will also clearly illustrate the role played by nonprofit partners, students, faculty, staff, and other interested community members in supporting the institutions' efforts. To be successful in the category, applicants should describe service projects results in outcome-oriented language. For example, institutions might describe how their activities reduced obesity rates, improved financial stability among families, or increased the capacity of citizens to serve in the event of a disaster.

Effective applications will demonstrate the best practices of community-campus partnerships. The project descriptions should clearly describe how the institution uses evaluation and assessments to improve the quality of the interventions. The application should discuss strategies the institution uses to build long-term, mutually-beneficial community partnerships and explain its efforts to enlist other collaborators (e.g. businesses, civic organizations, government agencies, faith-based institutions, etc.). Most important, the application should clearly and convincingly describe how the institution's activities produce measurable impacts that address needs in the community in which they are working.

General Community Service Activities Examples:

The three project examples illustrate the types of higher education service activities we are seeking.

Weitekamp University has created a long-term partnership with several community-based organizations to monitor and improve water quality in their local watershed. The University has created an environmental board where faculty, staff, local environmentalists and students develop a five-year plan to protect and rehabilitate the watershed. Students from the institution's environmental science classes conduct water testing each semester. Twice a year, the results of the water monitoring are submitted to the State Department of Environmental Quality to assist with statewide data collection. Students work with campus-based and community-based experts develop a plan that both identifies the source of the impediment and outlines steps to reduce its effect on water quality.

- Illustrates a university's long-term commitment to addressing a significant community environmental need.

Andersonville Community College is part of an Economic Development Association to spur economic growth in their local region. ACC faculty members work with the local government, workforce development organizations, and local businesses to develop and implement a master plan for the revitalization of the town core surrounding its campus. Students from a variety of classes provide market and policy research that informs the master plan for revitalization. ACC provides free-of-charge training programs to new or expanding employers who agree to locate within the town core. The college conducts annual assessments to determine the effectiveness of the initiatives and uses the feedback to adjust its performance.

- Highlights the college's work with community-based institutions to use service to support economic recovery in a local area.

Saint Katharine College is located in the same neighborhood as a large refugee resettlement center. The college's service activities focus on supporting refugee emergency housing assistance, helping newly arrived refugees adjust to their new community, and engaging their students as literacy and English language tutors. The College organizes a local advisory board for refugee issues with representation from community-based organizations, churches, and social service agencies. The local advisory board coordinates community efforts to meet the needs of its growing immigrant and refugee populations. College students participate at each level of this effort, working with the center to meet new residents' needs.

- Emphasizes the college's role in increasing the capacities of the local community to meet the needs of an underserved population.

Special Focus Area
Institutions applying in this category should apply with projects that support the Promise Neighborhood model, innovations in early childhood education, or summer learning.

The Promise Neighborhoods model is designed to improve the educational and developmental outcomes of all children in our most distressed communities, and transform those communities by improving educational outcomes. In this effort, the institution of higher education works with partners to develop wrap around services designed to improve educational and developmental outcomes for children in their communities. The Corporation recognizes that many schools have

been working for years in developing "cradle-to-career" solutions for young people in their communities. This competition seeks to recognize institutions for that long-term commitment.

Institutions applying for recognition of their work in the Promise Neighborhoods model should emphasize how their activities and resources support the coordination of youth-serving community organizations to increase the academic success of K-12 students. Service projects could also aim to build the capacity of such organizations to serve neighborhood youth. Successful applicants will be able to show that their programs address any of the following academic issues: improving student academic achievement in core subjects, supporting successful middle school to high school transition, or encouraging high school completion.

An explanation of community outcomes can be achieved by including qualitative descriptions of the program's impacts rather than only providing an account of the hours spent or students served.

Innovation in Early Childhood Education is intended to improve educational outcomes for young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs for high-need students. College or university service projects must use innovative practices and strategies to improve young children's school readiness. Applications should show how their efforts help young children transition between early learning programs and preschool or primary school.

For example, applicants can describe how their service activities help communities improve the readiness of children, especially low-income youth, to enter school. Project descriptions may explain strategies and activities that help schools reduce the achievement gap by providing extended, enriched, and intensive social, emotional, and academic learning experiences. Moreover, applications in this category should illustrate how institutions are building capacity in community-based preschools and day cares. Finally, such applications can also show how the applicant's institution is helping to develop teacher certification, curricula, and training for early childhood programs.

Emphasizing community outcomes in addition to output indicators should be done by reporting on how your service helps young children learn more, and learn better. Numbers of children served or classrooms reached are only part of the story.

Summer Learning helps reduce the academic achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth during the critical summer months. Effective summer learning opportunities improve academic outcomes for youth, can lead to higher graduation rates and can lead to better preparation for college. Institutions of higher education working in this area increase the opportunity for youth to participate in high quality summer learning programs. Such high quality programs provide activities that are age-appropriate and intentionally focused to build subject matter expertise and skill mastery. Successful programs will also include hands-on and project-based components that help participants develop skills for school and life.

To focus on community outcomes, applicants should describe how their service projects improve educational achievement for the participating youth. Applicants should describe any innovative

strategies and tactics undertaken to partner with low-performing schools to enhance existing summer learning programs. Further, applicants should explain how the interventions reverse or reduce the "summer slide," a loss of skills acquired during the school year, for K-12 students.

Strong applications will discuss the use of assessment and evaluation to improve their service interventions and provide credible evidence as well as measurable results.

Special Focus Area Activities Examples:

Epison University works with a broad coalition of youth-serving agencies to increase the academic achievement of youth who live in housing projects near the campus. Epison students mentor and tutor 4th and 5th graders at the local elementary school and using annual assessment tools, the University tracks student school engagement and academic achievement. Faculty members, along with staff at a local community-based organization, develop curriculum to use in an afterschool physical fitness program focused on childhood obesity prevention. The University devotes resources to the local school district and other community organizations to address a wide range of issues that include facilitating parenting classes, improving parent-school connections, increasing student study skills, and preparing students for life after high school.

- Illustrates a university's ability to use the Promise Neighborhood model to address the academic and social needs of youth in a specific locale.

Solomon State College works with the Bridging the Gap network of pre-school and day care centers, as well as two elementary schools, to align their curriculum so the preschool children are better prepared to transition to kindergarten. College faculty members help develop trainings that are delivered to the network and the elementary schools' staff. The college deploys 24 percent of its Federal Work-Study funds to support community service that supports school readiness for the youth served by the preschool and day care centers. The College is developing an early education certificate program and provides discounts to staff from the Bridging the Gap network teachers and teaching assistants, in order to improve the level of instruction that is offered at the centers. Every year the College conducts an intensive study to ascertain the effect of these efforts.

- Highlights the role of the institution helping a community improve the school readiness of its preschool population.

Arlington University hosts a space camp for area middle school youth on its campus every summer. University faculty members, working with aerospace industry experts and middle school science and math teachers, develop a three-week-long curriculum that demonstrates to students how the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) subjects are critical to a successful space program. This program draws undergraduate students from both STEM and Education disciplines to serve as camp counselors and tutors who help the students master the materials. Students are tested on their knowledge of STEM subjects at the beginning of the summer camp to establish a baseline and then again at the end of the program to determine the effects of the intervention. Every year, the university tracks the academic performance of students participating in the summer program during the following school year.

- Describes how a university is deploying its resources to help the local community prepare students for successful careers in sciences.

Application Review Information

Applications for the Honor Roll will be evaluated in three categories: Institutional Supports for Service, the Institutional Commitment to Service Statement, and Exemplary Project Descriptions. The weights assigned to each category are listed in the chart below. Reviewers will assess the Institutional Commitment to Service Statement and Exemplary Project Descriptions against the criteria listed below. Moreover, the extent to which the applicant responds to the priorities outlined in this Guidance will be a key factor.

Selection Criteria: Categories and Respective Weights

Category	Percentage
Institutional Supports for Service	60%
Institutional Commitment to Service Statement	20%
Exemplary Project Descriptions	20%

Institutional Supports for Service: Factors that make up the Institutional Supports for Service are listed below.

Quantitative Factors:
- the percentage of students participating in academic service-learning
- the percentage of students participating in community service activities overall
- the percentage of students who engaged in at least 20 hours of community service per academic term.* For quarter system at least 13 hours of community service per term.*
- the institution's latest Federal Work-Study community service participation rate as reported to the U.S. Department of Education (community service participation rate is based on the latest available figures provided by the Department of Education)
- the number of academic service-learning courses offered by the institution

Institutional Characteristics
- whether community service or service-learning is cited in the institution's mission statement or strategic plan
- whether the institution makes internal budgetary allocations to support service
- whether the institution has at least one full-time staff member responsible for coordinating student community service or service-learning activities
- whether the institution provides scholarships or other financial rewards for community service, such as "matching" the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
- whether the institution requires academic service-learning as part of the core curriculum of at least one major
- whether the institution rewards the use of academic service-learning through faculty promotion and tenure decisions, or other means
- whether the institution is classified as a Community Engagement institution by the Carnegie Foundation

Please note that in many cases "estimates" are requested. Estimates should be based on the best information available. All requested information and estimates are for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2012.

Institutional Commitment to Service Statement: This statement should describe your institution's commitment to service, providing the background and context of this commitment as illustrated by brief, varied examples of how it is demonstrated on campus and in your community-campus partnerships. This is the opportunity to explain the culture of service that exists at the institution and the impact that this culture has on the community.

> Strong statements MUST include:
> Detailed discussion of the institutional commitment to service, including:
> - explanation of the commitment of institutional resources to support service;
> - explanation of how that institutional commitment is implemented in the campus culture, academic programming and extracurricular activities;
> - discussion of the impact and effect of this commitment to service in the community; and
> - description of how your institution is using assessment and evaluation to improve the quality of your community-campus partnerships and service activities.

Note: If an application is submitted for recognition in the Special Focus Area, the institutional commitment statement must discuss the rationale for the institution's involvement in these areas.

Exemplary Project Descriptions: In this section, select three (six if applying under both categories) service projects that exemplify the institution's commitment to service. These narratives provide the applicant with opportunities to describe briefly specific projects that best illustrate the variety of activities in which the institution is engaged.

> Strong project descriptions MUST include:
> Explanation of the project and indication of the specific service provided, including:
> - who from your institution participates in the service (faculty, teachers, students, etc.);
> - who benefits from the service;
> - detailed evidence, including quantification, and description of the project's benefits to the population served;
> - how assessment and evaluation are used to improve the quality of the service;
> - program practices or institutional support elements that were found particularly helpful or effective;
> - indication of whether student participation was during regular academic sessions or during summer or other breaks (indicate frequency of service);
> - collaborations with community agencies, including K-12 schools;
> - whether the project was supported by Federal Work-Study, CNCS programs, or other Government programs; and
> - clear connection to the Institutional Commitment to Service Statement.

Provide details pertaining to each of the three evaluation categories: Project Scope, Evidence (Measurement) of Project Effectiveness, and Impact on Community.

> **Project Scope** assesses the breadth and depth of the project. Factors include: number of students serving (relative to school size), time dedicated to service, institutional staff support, participation and time committed, expertise utilized, collaboration with other organizations, leveraging of college or university, and community resources, and innovative use of creative solutions to address local problems.

> **Evidence (Measurement) of Project Effectiveness** includes the estimated number of individuals served, and measurable effects of service in the community (e.g., number of houses cleaned, renovated, built, etc.).

> **Impact on Community** describes either short- or long-term benefits of the service to the community. The project will be assessed on the evidence provided to demonstrate measurable impacts on the community.

Award Information

The General Community Service Presidential Awards will be presented to three institutions that reflect the best practices of community service and service-learning, such as long-term community-campus partnerships and measurable community outcomes as a result of the service.

The Special Focus Area Presidential Awards will be presented to three institutions that best demonstrate success in the key areas of the Obama service and education plan: work in the Promise Neighborhoods model; exemplifying and advancing the innovation in early childhood education partnerships, and finally, service that supports summer learning.

With Distinction: The Honor Roll's "With Distinction" recognition will be given to those applicants that display strong levels of institutional commitment, provide a compelling case for partnerships that produce measurable impact in the community, and have a Federal Work-Study community service percentage of at least 15% or above.

In addition, depending on the number and quality of applications received, awards may be made to the top scoring applicants within specific institutional segments, such as 2-year colleges or minority-serving institutions.

Honor Roll: An institution will be placed on the Honor Roll if the service described is deemed substantial, relevant and meaningful, and achieves measurable impacts in the community.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Application and Submission Process
The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Application is approved under OMB Control#: 3045-0120, Expiration Date 9/30/2013. Applications must be submitted online at http://myproject.nationalservice.gov/honorroll. We are unable to accept printed copies of the application. The form cannot be submitted until all required questions are answered. An error message will appear and the system will identify the required questions if an incomplete application is submitted. Applicants should print out the completed application for their records.

Once the application is submitted to the system, it will generate an email message informing the applicant that the application has been successfully accepted. If you do not receive an email within 24 hours, your application has not been accepted by the system. Please contact the Honor Roll Support Line at 202-606-3222.

Deadline for Submission
The deadline for institutions to submit applications is **November 29, 2012, at 5:00 PM**, **Eastern Time**. Nominations received after this the 5:00 PM deadline will not be considered.

Timeline for Review

Deadline for Submission:	**November 29, 2012**
Review Period:	December 2012
Awards Announced:	March 2013

Honor Roll Review Process
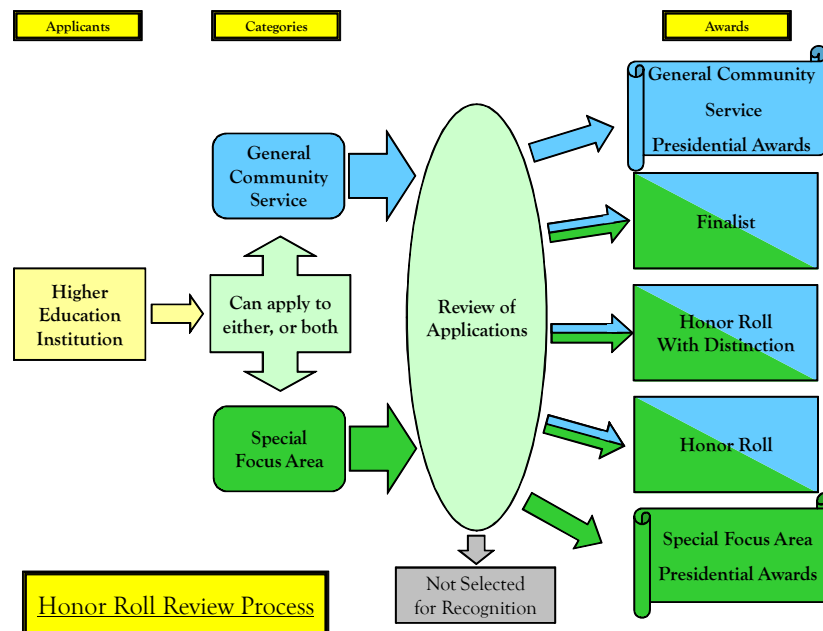
<u>Supplementary Information</u>
Applicants are not required to submit supplementary materials, such as brochures, video tapes, or testimonials from project beneficiaries with their applications. Applicants should be prepared to provide documentation of partnerships and other support described in the narrative such as Memoranda of Understanding, and evaluations. Applicants may be invited to provide such information at a later time.

<u>Privacy Policy</u>
An applicant institution's name, as well as all submission material, may be used for news or publicity programs connected with the Corporation. Information provided in the "exemplary project" descriptions may be published in connection with the Honor Roll on the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) website. Contact information, however, will not be shared with anyone outside the Corporation. Information provided by this collection will be held solely by CNCS staff.